

To learn more about the Helsinki Commission, of which I am proud to serve as its Co-Chairman, [click here](#) .

At this point in our history, there is no more important and dynamic relationship than that between the United States and Europe. In fact, it is my firm belief that 200 years after we forcibly extricated ourselves from Europe, our future today is now more intertwined with Europe than it has ever been. And, we should embrace this. Despite the separation of the Atlantic Ocean, the United States is a very integral part of Europe today. Indeed, I do not see a prosperous future for America without a strengthening relationship with Europe.

We have seen many changes in Europe in recent years. We have witnessed the rebirth of democracy in Eastern Europe, and the evolution of these states into stable economic and democratic countries; however, our work is certainly not complete. When I reflect upon the technological and political advances we have made in the last twenty years alone, from the development of the Internet to the almost complete extermination of totalitarian regimes, with some significant and conspicuous exceptions, I cannot even imagine what the world will be like twenty years from now. I have no doubt, though, that the United States will continue to play a vital role in helping the states that make up Europe, as well as all the other countries of the world, not just to adjust to the global shifts of governmental structures but to prosper from them as well.

There exists today a veritable cornucopia of challenges and opportunities facing the U.S.-European relationship. From defense and security issues to trade to health care to technological issues to fiscal policy, our relationship has been described as "uniquely broad, uniquely multifaceted, uniquely deep, and uniquely balanced."

As Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) and as former President of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly, I frequently have the occasion to meet with European heads of state and government, foreign ministers, and European parliamentarians. There is no doubt that ALL of them are committed to strengthening the U.S.-European relationship. It is in that spirit that I, too, expend some of my time and energies on these very important issues for Florida and, indeed, for the entire country.

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